



Summary of Fishery Surveys Bearskull Lake, Iron County, 2015

Bearskull Lake is a soft water drainage lake with predominantly gravel, muck, and sand substrates. It has a surface area of 77 acres, 2.0 miles of shoreline, and a maximum depth of 27 feet. The Mercer DNR Fisheries Management Team conducted the following fishery surveys on Bearskull Lake in 2015: an early-spring fyke netting survey targeting the walleye population, an early-spring electrofishing survey to complete a walleye population estimate, a late-spring electrofishing survey to assess bass and panfish populations, and a fall electrofishing survey to assess walleye recruitment. Quality, preferred, and memorable sizes referenced in this summary are based on standard proportions of world record lengths developed for each species by the American Fisheries Society, and reflect the percentage of the adult population sampled larger than the specified size.

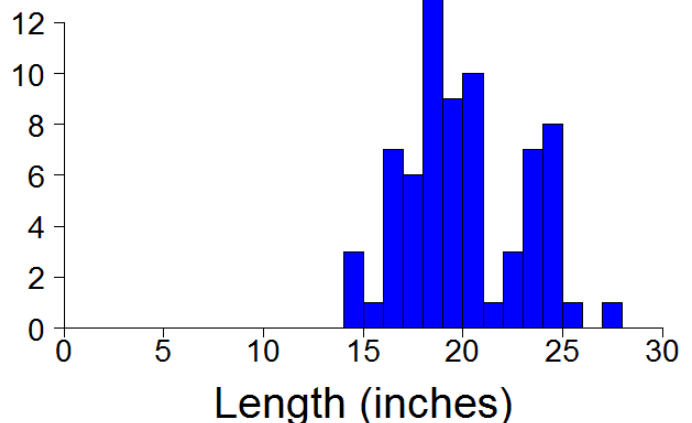


Walleye Size Groups (PSD/RSD)

Size Class	% of Sample
Quality (> 15 in.)	96
Preferred (> 20 in.)	44
Memorable (> 25 in.)	3

Fish Captured

Walleye



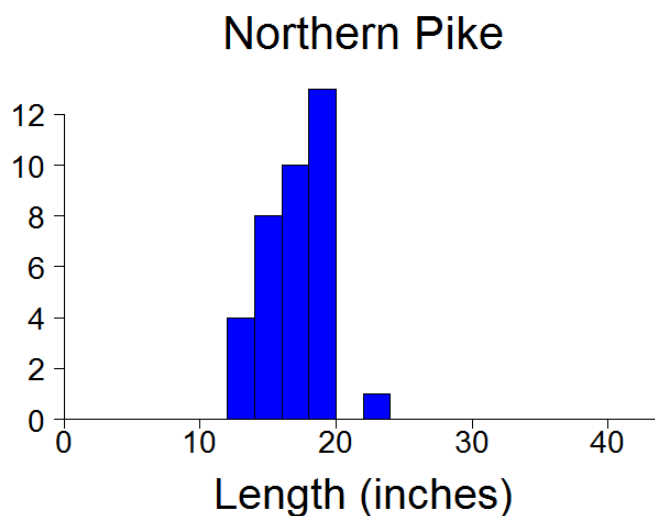
During the targeted early-spring fyke netting survey we captured a total of 56 adult walleyes at a rate of 2.8/net-night. In our early-spring electrofishing survey, we captured a total of 10 adult walleyes at a rate of 4.2/mile. Using mark-and-recapture techniques, we calculated a population estimate at 150 adult walleyes or 1.7 per acre of surface water. Walleyes ranged in length from 14.3" – 27.3" and averaged 20". No natural recruitment was documented during the fall electrofishing survey. These results suggest that adult walleyes are currently present at relatively low densities, although the population is comprised of primarily quality sized individuals.



Northern Pike Size Groups (PSD/RSD)

Size Class	% of Sample
Quality (> 21 in.)	3
Preferred (> 28 in.)	0
Memorable (> 34 in.)	0

Fish Captured



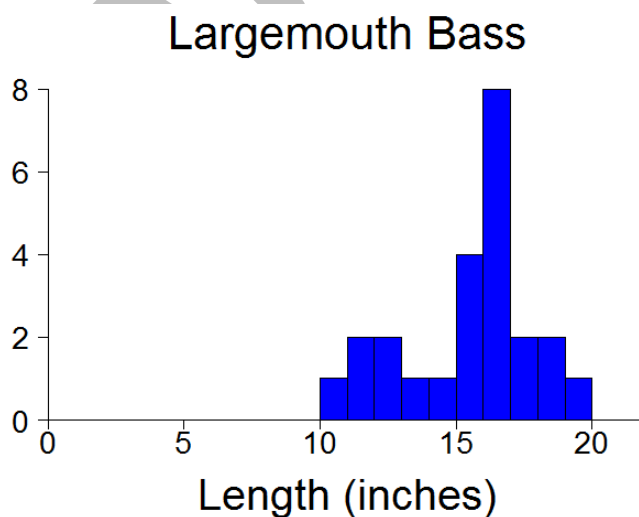
Although survey efforts did not target northern pike populations, northern pike were sampled at low capture rates during all surveys. Northern pike from all surveys ranged in length from 13.1” – 22.0” and averaged 17.1”. These results suggest that northern pike are currently at low densities, and most individuals present are relatively small in size.



Largemouth Size Groups (PSD/RSD)

Size Class	% of Sample
Quality (> 12 in.)	88
Preferred (> 15 in.)	71
Memorable (> 20 in.)	0

Fish Captured



During the targeted late-spring electrofishing survey, we captured only 9 largemouth bass at a rate of 3.0/mile. However, largemouth bass were also sampled at consistent rates during non-targeted surveys during 2015 and those individuals were included in the above figure to better depict the population size distribution. Largemouth bass in all surveys ranged in length from 10.8” – 19.7” and averaged 15.4”. These results suggest that largemouth bass are currently present in low densities, but the population exhibits a balanced size structure with some quality individuals present.

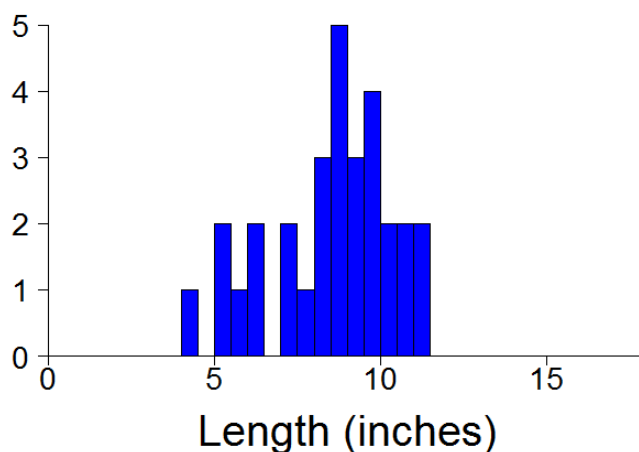


Black Crappie Size Groups (PSD/RSD)

Size Class	% of Sample
Quality (> 8 in.)	72
Preferred (> 10 in.)	21
Memorable (> 12 in.)	0

Fish Captured

Black Crappie



An early-spring fyke netting survey sampled a total of 63 black crappies at a rate of 3.2/net-night. Crappies ranged in length from 4.1” – 11.3” and averaged 8.5”. These results suggest that crappies are currently present in relatively low densities, but the population exhibits a well-balanced size structure.

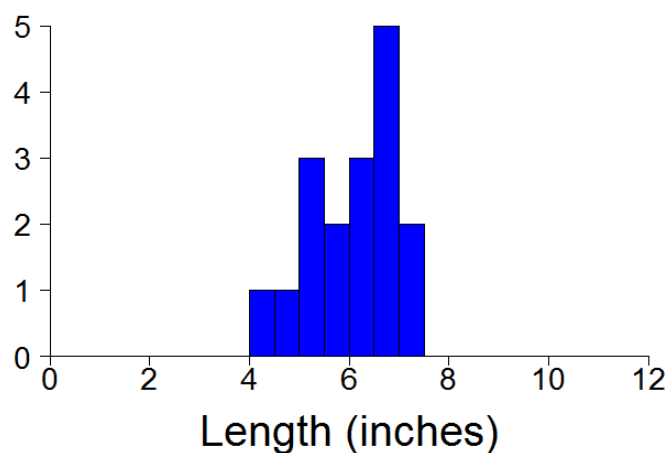


Bluegill Size Groups (PSD/RSD)

Size Class	% of Sample
Quality (> 6 in.)	59
Preferred (> 8 in.)	0
Memorable (> 10 in.)	0

Fish Captured

Bluegill



A targeted late-spring electrofishing survey sampled 15 bluegills at a rate of 30.0/mile. For all bluegills sampled, individuals ranged in length from 4.4” – 7.2” and averaged 6.0”. Results from this survey suggest that bluegills are present in low densities and the population exhibits a moderate size structure.

Additional Notes:

Smallmouth bass, pumpkinseed, yellow bullhead, rock bass, and white sucker were also documented in low abundances during these surveys. For questions or additional results from 2015 survey work contact:

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